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ABSTRACT

This paper introduces some Internet sites related to literature for children and young adults. The first section looks at guides to literature for children and young adults on the Internet; these sites provide access to the vast majority of children's literature sites on the World Wide Web and are the best places to begin searching. The second section describes selected sites which contain actual, online, full-text literature for children and young adults. The third category of sites examined are those that contain reviews, bibliographies, and awards lists. Sites that provide activities related to children's and young adult literature, particularly teaching activities for classroom use, are described in the fourth section. The final section looks at more general sites geared toward children and education. (MES)

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# Children and Young Adult Literature on the Internet: an Introduction

Ruth Kinnersley

ED 430 530

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**Abstract**

This presentation is intended to introduce some Internet sites related to literature for children and young adults, and to provide a sampling of the types of sites which are available. Guides to children's and young adult literature on the web; sites which contain full-text, reviews, or bibliographies of children's literature; teaching activities; and general sites for kids which include children's and young adult literature are examined. Those who are interested in Internet-based teaching activities, or ideas for the use of children's and young adult literature in the classroom, would find this presentation useful.

**Introduction**

There are a large number - and a huge variety - of sites on the Internet which concern literature for children and young adults. This presentation is intended to introduce a few key sites, and also to provide a sampling of the many interesting and helpful sites which contain, or relate to, children's and young adult literature. First we will look at guides to literature for children and young adults on the Internet. These sites provide access to the vast majority of children's literature sites on the web and are the best places to begin. Second, we will look at selected sites which contain actual, online, full-text literature for children and young adults. These sites provide a sampling of the kinds of literature available for children and young adults on the Internet. The third category! of sites we'll examine are those which contain reviews, bibliographies, and awards lists. Fourth Will be sites which contain activities related to children's and young adult literature, particularly teaching activities for classroom use. Finally, we'll look at more general sites which contain activities for kids, of which stories or literature is a part.

In selecting sites for this presentation, a number of factors were taken into consideration: comprehensiveness of a site (the depth and/or breadth of material related to children's literature), how well the site is maintained and updated, who created or maintains the site, and individual features, such as unique lists, chat areas, and search engines.

**Guides to Children's and Young Adult Literature on the Internet**

The first site in this presentation is one of the best "organizing" sites for finding children's lit on the Internet. The Children's Literature Web Guide http://www.ucalgary.ca/ ~dkbrown/index html) was created and is maintained by David K. Brown Director of the Doucette Library of Teaching Resources at the University of Calgary. He provides access to online children's stories, general children's literature

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resources, journals and reviews online, conferences, related associations on the Internet, discussion groups, links to children's authors and publishers, bestseller lists, and resources for parents, teachers, storytellers, and writers and illustrators. This site has particularly good links to "best books" lists and children's book award lists. A unique feature of this site is a list of movies and television based on children's books. The site focuses on links to international, English language pages (with some exceptions). A particularly nice feature is a brief description of each site to which a link is provided. The creator has indicated which are, in his opinion, the best sites by marking them with a bouquet of flowers! A search engine is available for those who are looking for specific material, but this is a wonderful site to browse, and, for children's and young adult literature, is a better starting place than the general web searchers.

Another "general guide ' is **Electronic Resources for Youth Services** (http://ccn.cs. dal.ca!-aa:31/childlit.html). While not as comprehensive as The Children's Literature W eb Guide, this page is well-laid out, with lots of helpful links. The areas covered include award inning books, book reviews, reading and storytelling, writing resources, online children's literature, educational sites, links to authors, publishers, and booksellers, associations, listervs, news groups, and miscellaneous resources. This site also provides keyword searching capabilities. A youth chat room for all who want to discuss topics related to children's literature has recently been added to this site. There is also a "Site of the Month," featured on the first page.

**Kay Vandergrift's Special Interest Pages** (http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/special/kay/childlit.html/ and http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/special/kay/yalit.html) provide an entirely different way to access children's and young adult literature on the web. Dr. Vandergrift teaches children's and young adult literature in the School of Communication Information and Library Studies at Rutgers's University. Her page is a combination of information a student of children's and ya literature would need (including evaluative questions about the literature, the history of children s lit, the context in which to approach and understand young adult literature) and links to other sites of interest to students and those uith a less scholarly interest in the field. The background she provides malces it well worth your while to take a look at this page and its links, especially if you are a teacher or student of children's literature. Her list of links for authors of children's and young adult literature is particularly long!

The final site in the category of genera] guides is **Children's Literature Reference** (http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PCL/child/). This site is designed to provide access to "basic sources in the area of children' literature," and it succeeds admirably. Maintained at the University of Texas at Austin, a unique feature of this site is its links to bibliographies of materials held in the University of Texas libraries. "UT Austin Resources" is one of the links from the main page, and links to UT Austin bibliographies are included on other pages, where tines are appropriate. The categories for links include Awards and Honors, Classics, Teacher Resources, Authors and Illustrators, Genre, Suggested Web Sites, Reviews and Criticism, and Electronic Journals. The links under Teacher Resources include Associations; Bibliographies; Indexes, Abstracts, and Search Engines; Libraries; Listservs; and Lists of Online Books and Miscellaneous Resources. A one-sentence description accompanies each link. Along with the Children's Literature Web Guide, this is one of the more comprehensive sites for providing links to additional Internet sites which relate to children's and young adult literature.

**Full-text Children's Literature**

As with all of the following categories, there are additional resources linked at each of the sites above, including many more than are reviewed here. The purpose of this section is to provide a sampling of the variety of children's literature on the Internet, and that varies, is wide.. While one may not prefer to read the entire text of Huckleberrs Finn online, it still can be useful for class activities to have access to the full text of children's and young adult literature classics through the Internet. Stories which combine video and audio components with the text constitute another option in children's and young adult literature - one which displays the capabilities of the World Wide Web Sites which contain stories written by children, provide "add-on" stories, and display stories written by a class provide an opportunity for learning which is unique to the Internet.

The first kind of literature we will examine online is the classicschildren's and young adult books which are in the public domain and whose text has been entered onto the Internet in its full form. These two examples are gopher sites: gopher://lib.nmsu.edu/1 1/.subjects/ Education/.childlit/.childbooks/ and gopher://gopher:cascade.net/1 1/pub/'LiteraturelChildrens Here are located some of the works of Louisa May Alcott, Charles Dickens, Rudyard Kipling, Robert Louis Stevenson Mark Twain, and others. Gopher sites, which don't use graphics, are ideally suited for long amounts of texts. Look at gopher://lib.nmsu.edu/11/.subjects/Education/.childlit/ 11.subjects/Education/.childlitl for an interesting array of resources related to children's literature.

Another type of literature of interest to children and young adults is found in **Tales of Wonder** (http://www.ece.ucdavis.edu/~darsie/tales.html). This site has collected folk and fairy tales from around the world and placed them online. Sources for the tales are cited, and the text of the tales is in large print, on a colored background, which is very appealing to children. The tales are truly from all over the world: Asia, Russia, India, Scandinavia, Scotland, Africa, and the Americas. This site could used in the classroom for comparing the similarities and differences of tales from different lands.

The **Internet Public Library's Story Hour** (http://www.ipl.org/youth/StoryHour/) provides pictures, and sometimes audio, to accompany the handful of stories they provide. The stories are truly charming; particularly "Do Spiders Live on the World Wide Web?" The Internet Public Library also has other activities for children, and their teen division covers a wide variety of topics of interest to y oung adults, such as career and college, issues and conflicts, arts and entertainment, books and writing, and health.

Another application of the Intemet to the publishing of children's literature is to publish stories children have written themselves. One site that does this is KidPub (http://www.kidpub. org/kidpub/). You can find original stories from kids of all ages - a sampling revealed stories from children aged 4 1/2 to 17, living around the world. In addition, there's a chat area, a message center, a collaborative story (where each child adds a paragraph to make the story progress), and a place to hook up with an Intemet pen pal. The site administrator also provides a form and instructions on how to send your own story to KidPub.

**Bibliographies and Reviews of Children's Literature** .

Virtually every site uhich deals with children's and young adult literature also has some lists of books, collection of reviews, or links to reviews and bibliographies at other sites. A couple of "standard" examples, and some more unique sites uill be discussed here. One can't get more standard than the online version of the American Library Association's Booklist (http://uuu.ala.orglbooklist/). Booklist has a selection of reviews and feature articles available online from olumes 92 and 93. This represents a nice collection of reviews for children's and young adult literature, as uell as adult literature, multimedia, and revieu s of reference materials. One of the pu poses of this ueb site is to interest ueb searchers in subscribing to the print ersion of Booklist, and subscription information is included.

Another review site, which has aluays been an online review journal, is Notes from the Windowsill (http://www.arrnory.com/~web,notes.html). It was formerly knoun as The WEB Online Review. They are one of the few online children's book review services that does not also sell children's books. The revieus are both descriptive and evaluative. The home page allows access to the issues of Notes from the Windowsill via gopher or ftp, as well as pick of the month (editor's choice for the best, most interesting or most memorable book reviewed each month), subject bibliographies, and links to other pages.

The **Cooperative Children's Book Center** is a non-circulating examination center and research library for adults uith an interest in children's and young adult literature. Located within the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, it is designed to provide a collection of current, retrospective, and historical books for children and young adults, provide informational and educational services based on the collection to Wisconsin librarians, teachers,
students, and others, and to support teaching, reaming, and research needs. Their web site (http://uu~,.soemadison.wisc.edu/ccbc) provides information about their services and publications; a list

of Wisconsin authors and their current books, and a variety of list of books, including their choice of best books from the current year, books translated from foreign languages, and multiracial books. They also provide addresses for small and alternative presses.

The Children's Literature Home Page (http://www.parentsplace.corn/readroorn/ children/index.html) provides reviews for multimedia materials designed for children and young adults, in addition to reviews of books. There are over 60 multimedia titles listed here, with revieus uhich include information on uhat equipment is needed to run the program, appropriate ages, and an evaluative description. Besides softuare reviews, there are subject bibliographies, "Top 150 (Book) Choices for 1995", and an online archive of reviews. This web site is based on the print magazine Children s Literature, and included is information on hou to subscribe to the
print version.

**Activities Related to Children's Literature**

Besides reviews of children's lit, on the Internet, there are sites which provide ideas for teaching activities based on children's and young adult literature. Again, just a sampling of sites is provided here; there are a great many more available to the web searcher.

Carol Hurst urites a column for Teaching Pre-K-8 magazine, and she also has a wonderful web site called **Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site (http://www.crocker.com/** ~rebotis) Her activities use children's literature across the curriculum, in the Pre-kindergarten
through grade 8 classroom. Besides listings of titles, there are curriculum areas, professional topics, subject lists, and an index. In each of these areas, a link is provided for each title listed. Under each title is a review, things to notice and talk about, activities, related books, related areas within the site (usually leading to a subject list), and related areas on the Internet. The activities are appropriate for the grade levels for which the book is recommended. A search engine is also part of this site, for those seeking specific information.

The **ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication** provides a variety of activities for teachers and for parents (http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec/index.html). For teachers, there are lesson plans, parent involvement materials, and professional development workshops. For parents. there is a section entitled "Family Learning" v;hich includes resources for parents, and a senior partners pen pal program, matching adult letter writers with junior partners. Of particular interest is Parents and Children Together Online, an online "magazine" with read-along stories, interactive storytelling, articles for parents on all aspects of children's education and a parent's role in it, and reviews of children's books. There are also links to other sites of interest to parents. children, children's writers, and educators.

Many publishers also provide lesson plans for the children's literature they publish. One example is Bantam Doubleday Dell Teacher's Resource Center ( http://www.bdd.com/forum/ bddforum.cgi/trc/index/general). Check the sites listed at the beginning of this article under "Major Children's Literature web pages" for lists of publisher's sites. Some author's home pages also include teaching ideas for their books.

**General Sites geared toward Children and Education**

Some sites designed for children aren't specifically related to children's literature, although it may be a part of the site. One such (outstanding!) site is maintained by Brendan Kehoe. It's called simply Kids on the Web (http://www.zen.org/~brendan/kids.htrnl) and its goal is "to collect, in one place, a body of information that people can use either to let kids play with stuff on the Internet, or to find the things they need for their work related to the care and education of children." The site includes links to sites for children, divided into "fun stuff" and educational sites, information about kid's safety on the Internet, and sites related to children's books and stories. For a quick overview of how many sites on the Internet are geared to children, start here.

The Internet has also proved to be a boon to home-schoolers, and many home pages from this group provide educational activities for children. One good example is **the Teel family on the Web** (http://www.teelfamily.com). The Teels live in Alaska, and many of their educational units and activities are related to their state and the unique features of living in the north. They have included a search engine, for those looking for specific material. The Teel family site is linked to the Homeschool Web Ring (http://www.integralink/com/). This is part of the Integral Link Web page, uhich is designed to serve as a resource for online and home-based education. Besides the Homeschool Web Ring, which will take you to other home-schoolers' sites, the Integral Link Web page provides an online Internet course, a list of online college courses f om Edmonds Cormnunity College, home-based education resources, online education resources and links, and more! This provides easy access to materials and activities designed for and by homeschoolers.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this presentation has been to provide a brief introduction to Internet sites which provide ideas and resourc :s for people interested in children's and young adult literature. It just scratches the surface -- for every site described here, there are many more on the Internet, waiting to be discovered. Some have even been created since this presentation was prepared! The Internet has a vast amount of valuable information related to children's literature.

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